United Nations A/49/PV.18

General Assembly
Forty-ninth Session

Official Records

18th Meeting
Wednesday, 5 October 1994, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Address by Mr. Bakili Muluzi, President of the Republic of Malawi

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will first hear an address by the President of the Republic of Malawi.

Mr. Bakili Muluzi, President of the Republic of Malawi, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Malawi, His Excellency Mr. Bakili Muluzi, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Muluzi (Malawi): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. Malawi is proud of you and of your country, Côte d'Ivoire, as you represent Africa in that very important post. I have every confidence that you will guide the deliberations of the Assembly to a successful conclusion.

I join other delegations in paying tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally of Guyana. Mr. Insanally fulfilled his mandate very well indeed, despite the many difficult tasks the United Nations had to carry out during the past year. My delegation wishes Ambassador Insanally well in his future endeavours.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has once again demonstrated that he is the right man to lead our Organization as it continues to assume greater responsibilities, particularly in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Secretary-General has ably led the Organization in responding most positively to the many conflict situations that beset the world today. My Government lends its support to his considerable efforts aimed at assuring international peace and security and at promoting economic and social development around the world. We wish him all the best in carrying out his arduous tasks.

As I address the Assembly today, 30 years after the only time my predecessor did so, I bring with me a message of renewed hope and friendship from the people of a newly democratic Republic of Malawi to all the peoples of all the States represented here this morning. Freed from fears of itself, Malawi courageously embraces the rest of the family of nations; freed from self-imposed isolation, Malawi stands ready to engage actively in efforts to find international solutions to the problems of our times.

Everyone here today will be fully aware of the political changes that have taken place in my country during the past two years. The one-party dictatorship that had ruled Malawi for 30 years came to an ignoble end by the will of the people. In the historic elections held on 17 May this year, the people of Malawi threw out an oppressive Government that had for so long trampled upon their human rights and fundamental

94-86541 (E)

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freedoms with impunity, through arbitrary arrests, detentions without trial, and torture, a Government that brutally suppressed all political dissent and denied its people any form of freedom of expression and association. In so doing, it sought to rob its people of the very essence of a human being: the ability to think. The people of Malawi rejoin the family of nations today as a free people.

Let me assure the Assembly that the Malawian people shall never allow any form of dictatorship to rear its ugly head on their soil again.

The national referendum held in June 1993 and the presidential and parliamentary elections held in May this year took place in a peaceful manner, and have both been declared by the international community to have been free and fair. This outcome was a clear manifestation of the ardent desire of the people of Malawi to see change brought about in their country: positive change, where human rights and fundamental freedoms are enjoyed and respected by all, individually and collectively.

The changes in Malawi resulted also from the concerted efforts and assistance of the international community. On behalf of the Government and the people of Malawi, I wish particularly to thank the United Nations for its special role in the process of reform and democratization in Malawi. The Electoral Assistance Division of the Secretariat here in New York, the Centre for Human Rights in Geneva and the office of the United Nations Development Programme in Malawi all worked tirelessly to help us set up the necessary institutional framework for bringing about the desired political change.

Let me also thank the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Organization of African Unity, the friendly Governments and the non-governmental organizations that were involved in our transition process for the invaluable assistance they too rendered to Malawi during this very critical and delicate stage of our nation's evolution. It is my sincere hope that our partners in the democratic transition will consider ways in which they can continue to work with the Malawian people as they confront the many serious problems arising from the excesses and vagaries of the discredited order they recently overturned.

My Government is committed to consolidating peace, democracy and the rule of law in Malawi. We have emphasized that our struggle was not about personalities or individual leaders, but rather about changing the political way of life. It has always been the desire of the Government to work constructively, together with other parties, for the benefit of the nation. It is therefore pleasing that recently the Government and one of the opposition parties, the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD), reached an agreement that facilitated the appointment to the Cabinet of some AFORD members, including Mr. Chakufwa Chihana, President of AFORD.

My Government has refrained from any form of witch-hunting or revenge against members of the former regime. No one in Malawi need ever fear for his life or liberty simply because he holds differing political views or beliefs. In this context, my Government will guarantee all persons accused of wrongdoing the opportunity to be heard in an open court of law.

We have at the same time expressed our desire to see established in Malawi a culture of respect for human rights. In this regard, my Government has, among other things, recently signed with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Ayala Lasso, who visited us in August, a Joint Declaration on the Mutual Desire to Cooperate in the Development of Programmes for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in Malawi. Education in Human Rights has thus a prominent place in the programmes that are envisaged. This is because my Government firmly believes that the rule of law in Malawi can be consolidated if the people know and understand what their rights are.

Basic human rights and fundamental freedoms cannot however be meaningfully enjoyed where people are living in conditions of economic desperation. The majority of the people of Malawi live in extreme poverty. It is for this reason, therefore, that poverty alleviation has been given top priority on my Government's agenda. The focus on the alleviation of poverty is intended to help consolidate the freedom and democracy that Malawians currently enjoy.

It is common knowledge that, out of a total in 1994 of 173 countries, Malawi is number 15 from the bottom on the scale of United Nations Development Programme human development indicators. This reflects our extremely low ratings in socio-economic indicators, covering areas such as health, social welfare, education, housing, food and nutrition. Malawi's external debt is also quite high. At the end of June 1994, the external debt stock stood at $1.9 billion. Malawi's balance of payments position is precarious. Its commodity terms of trade are deteriorating and are currently estimated at 72.3 per cent.

Meanwhile, Malawi continues to suffer from the effects of the severe drought of 1992-1993, which afflicted the whole of southern Africa. The country is once again experiencing serious food shortages, owing primarily to very poor rains in the 1993-1994 season. The country urgently needs nearly 400,000 metric tons of grain, mainly maize, if it is to avert mass starvation and death among the people.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has also adversely affected my country. The ones hardest hit by this scourge are the young and most productive segment of the population. The resources which my Government is able to allocate, in its national budget, for dealing with this problem are far from adequate: it wishes it could do more.

Malawi continues to suffer also from the after-effects of the influx of refugees of recent years. The number of refugees from neighboring Mozambique, which once totalled over a million people, has now been reduced to nearly a quarter of a million. But it will take years, probably decades, to deal with the full impact of such large numbers. Many sectors of the economy, such as health, education, the basic infrastructure and the environment, have been adversely affected, with grave implications for the already serious poverty in the country.

It is thus quite clear that fulfillment of the Government's policy for the alleviation of poverty will be a major challenge indeed. The task ahead is enormous. Many sacrifices will have to be made. My Government is, however, determined to meet the challenges head-on. We have to try in order to succeed. In this context, my Government is working out a programme of poverty alleviation that will be flexible and implementable, and which can benefit from tangible and active assistance from the donor community. A Presidential Council on Poverty Alleviation, under my chairmanship, has been established to advise the Government on the actual implementation of the programmes envisaged. It is the Government's intention that people in the rural areas should be the main beneficiaries of the poverty alleviation programmes.

The programmes will also give special attention to the situation of children. Malawi is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is the intention of the new government to translate the provisions of the Convention into reality for every child. The first step was the introduction, last month, of free primary education. To date, there are 3.2 million children in school — an increase of 1.3 million from last year. This truly is a children's educational revolution.

My Government is conscious of the need to empower women so that they can become active in all sectors of the economy and so that discrimination against women and girls may become a thing of the past. Efforts are under way to close the gender gap in primary and higher education and to ensure the participation of women in decision-making. We look forward to participating in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995.

Allow me at this juncture, on behalf of the Government and the people of Malawi, to thank, most sincerely, the United Nations system, donor Governments and agencies, and our many other partners in development for the invaluable assistance that they have given to Malawi since it attained independence. I have broadly outlined the problems and challenges that Malawi faces. I am very confident that our partners in development will continue to assist us as we forge ahead in our efforts to improve the standard of living of our people. I wish to appeal specifically for donor sympathy to write off existing loans made to the Malawi Government.

I wish to assure you, Mr. President, that any assistance that is given to Malawi will be used for the purpose and target groups intended. The democratically elected Government should be given the chance to make democracy work. I also invite the private and public sectors to come and invest in Malawi. The investment climate in Malawi is very favourable, and opportunities exist in such areas as tourism, mining, finance and banking, and distribution.

Malawi welcomes the efforts to redefine the role of the United Nations in matters pertaining to development. In this context, the report (A/48/935) of the Secretary-General, "An Agenda for Development", is, in our view, very timely indeed. The priority areas for development outlined in the report deserve the political commitment, active support and tangible assistance of the international financial and donor community. The key and persistent problem areas of concern — external debt and debt servicing, poor access to science and technology for development, inadequate financial flows, rapid population growth, and problems relating to women and to social development — need to be tackled head-on. Africa is particularly afflicted by these problems and deserves focused attention.

The crisis situation facing Africa calls for urgent and important measures, such as those outlined in the

United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, which has yet to be implemented. These measures, as augmented by the conclusion of the Tokyo Conference on African Development, should be given active support. Malawi regards the recommended priorities for development in the Agenda for Development and the Programme of Action outlined in the New Agenda for the Development of Africa as being complementary and critical to the development of Africa. Malawi is all the more interested in these developments because they are exactly in line with the poverty-alleviation strategies that it has set for itself.

Many positive political developments have taken place in Africa in recent times. The current wave of democratization has reached many parts of the continent, including the southern Africa region, and apartheid has been buried. Let me take this opportunity to congratulate the people of South Africa on their first truly democratic general elections, held in April this year, which ushered in the multiracial Government led by His Excellency Mr. Nelson Mandela. The present Malawi Government is pleased that South Africa has finally and proudly resumed its seat in the General Assembly and in all the other bodies of the United Nations, as a free country.

The people of Malawi have close social, cultural, economic and other relations with the people of Mozambique; thus their joy is our joy and their sorrow is our sorrow. We are one people. We therefore welcome wholeheartedly the fact that the General Peace Agreement is so far being implemented satisfactorily. And as Mozambique moves closer to its first multi-party general elections later this month, it is our firm belief that the successful installation of a newly elected Government in that country will be a major accomplishment for the international community and southern Africa, in general, and for the Mozambican people, in particular. Such an outcome will give the people of Mozambique the opportunity to rebuild their country and truly embark on development after many years of vicious civil war. We wish the people of Mozambique every success as they draw nearer to the election date.

The success of the peace process in Angola would be cause for great jubilation and satisfaction for my Government and the people of Malawi. For too long the people of Angola have been denied peace. They deserve to live in honour and dignity. They have a right to a peaceful present and a hopeful future. Peace in Angola would also be of benefit to the entire southern African region. Southern Africa requires peace, security and political stability to enable it to harness and direct its vast human and natural resources towards economic growth and sustainable development.

We are thus encouraged by the indications of some progress in the peace talks that have been going on in Lusaka, Zambia, under the auspices of the United Nations. We fervently look forward to the conclusion of a mutually agreed final resolution to the longstanding political deadlock and armed conflict in Angola.

The peaceful resolution of conflicts in other parts of Africa would give us in Malawi equal joy and comfort. Thus, for example, the situation in Rwanda has been a source of great concern to my country. We are, however, gratified that the horrible carnage we saw in Rwanda recently has since come to an end and that the cholera epidemic and the outbreak of dysentery in the refugee camps in eastern Zaire have now been brought under control. My Government is pleased to have made a modest troop contribution to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). In this connection, let me most sincerely thank the Belgian Government for providing the Malawi troop contingent in UNAMIR with logistical and other support.

The task of the international community in Rwanda goes beyond humanitarian assistance. The world must, in the short term, undertake to assist Rwanda in the process of political settlement based on national reconciliation. In the long term, however, the major challenge for the international community and the people of Rwanda themselves is to find ways and means to resolve permanently the issues that breed and nurture the kind of intense ethnic fears and suspicion that have resulted during the past quarter of a century alone in over four waves of blood-letting, which seem to grow more horrendous on each successive occasion.

My Government wishes to record here its support for the courageous efforts exerted by the people of Burundi to avert a similar situation to that which has consumed neighbouring Rwanda. It has been slow and painfully frustrating, but we believe that by having resorted to the negotiating table, and not to arms, the people of Burundi have taken the first step towards finding a lasting solution that will ultimately secure permanent peace for their country. We wish them well in this noble endeavour.

My Government is greatly concerned at the apparent lack of a decisive response from the international

community to the pitiful situations in Liberia and Somalia. We are also saddened by the fact that inflexibility and dogmatism seem once again to have brought to naught months of painstaking effort in the search for a solution to the problems of Sudan. Our sincere hope is that the latest set-back will not lead to abandonment of the Sudan situation by the international community.

My Government has followed closely the situation in Western Sahara. While the General Assembly has been seized of the situation in that Territory, we note with much concern that real interest in this issue appears to diminish every year. It seems that the Assembly has begun routinely to adopt resolutions that, in fact, are leading directly to international acquiescence in the status quo. We therefore call upon the international community, and in particular the United Nations, to live up to its responsibilities and fulfil its promise to the Sahouri people by acting without any further delay to hold the long-awaited referendum on that Territory's political future.

My Government has followed with equally keen interest developments in other regions of the world. We have been encouraged by the quickened tempo of the peace process in the Middle East, as well as by the flame of hope, albeit flickering, kindled by the first serious dialogue between the parties to the political deadlock over the Korean Peninsula. It is my Government's hope that the dialogue that has been going on between the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan will lead to a solution that is mutually satisfactory to the parties concerned.

At the same time, we have been deeply grieved by the situation in the former Yugoslavia, where some, with a seemingly perverted sense of fair play, would have us believe that if the victimized are prevented from defending themselves against the aggressors the conflict there can more quickly be brought to an end.

Recently delegations from the United States and Cuba met in this historic city and, through negotiations unfettered by preconditions, were able to reach a mutually agreeable solution to a dispute that had heightened tension between the two countries. We believe that, through a similar approach, these two neighbouring countries could also resolve such differences as have divided them for nearly 40 years. Five years after the fall of the Berlin Wall and after the cold war was declared over, we can see no reason why these two great nations should not sheathe their cold-war sabres and embrace each other for the sake of peace and progress in their region. My Government therefore eagerly looks forward to the day when it can join the world in applauding the resumption of normal and friendly relations between Cuba and the United States.

The founders of the United Nations set forth principles that have stood the test of time. The validity of the purposes of the Organization cannot be denied, even today. Malawi believes in the principles and purposes of the United Nations. In our view, this Organization, with all its shortcomings, still represents a viable option for addressing the many political, socio-economic and other issues that confront our world today. Working through the United Nations, we can all make our world a better place.

The year 2000 is just six years away. Let us all work together to make the twenty-first century one in which respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and respect for the rule of law are the rule and not the exception. Let us work together to emancipate our people from the socio-economic and other ills that hold them in bondage to misery in their daily lives. Let us work together to avert the escalation of conflict situations. The peaceful settlement of disputes remains one of the cardinal principles of this Organization and of international law. Let us make mediation a priority — mediation at any stage of a conflict. But, better still, let us use this Organization to find ways to reduce, if not to eliminate, the causes of conflict situations; to reduce, if not to eliminate, the means by which conflicts are fuelled and perpetrated. In making these humble suggestions, we are inspired by the preamble to the Charter.

On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Charter, let us resolve to make the Organization even more relevant for the next 50 years. Let us work to strengthen the United Nations. Let us make the organs of the Organization more effective, transparent and accountable. In this regard, we support the current efforts to reform the Security Council, provided that such reform is not at the expense of effectiveness.

Let us all work together to rationalize the work programmes of the United Nations. Let the agenda of our Organization reflect the priorities of our time.

The people of Malawi have embraced democracy and the rule of law, and they look forward to consolidating their recovered freedom. At a time when global interdependence has become a reality, the people of Malawi look optimistically towards a reform of this

Organization that will ensure that it can more effectively play its role in international efforts to achieve security and economic prosperity for all the peoples of the world.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Malawi for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Bakili Muluzi, President of the Republic of Malawi, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 ***(continued)***

General debate

Address by Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, His Excellency The Right Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth (Mauritius): Let me say at the outset how pleased I am to see you, Sir, presiding over the General Assembly at this session. In addition to being a well-deserved tribute to you personally and to your country, your presidency is a distinct honour and privilege for Africa. Your task will definitely not be easy but we are confident that your wisdom and broad experience will help guide our Organization in discharging its leadership role in world affairs. I hasten to pledge to you my delegation's full cooperation and active participation in the deliberations ahead.

Let me take this opportunity to say how welcome the leadership provided by Ambassador Samuel Insanally was during the past session. We commend him for the clear vision and diligence with which he steered the work of the Organization.

The Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, equally deserves appreciation for having carried out his responsibilities with sagacity and serenity despite the complex and sensitive nature of the issues that have retained our attention this past year.

It is also my distinct pleasure to associate myself with all those who have extended a hearty welcome to non-racial democratic South Africa within the fold of the Assembly. The end of apartheid in South Africa also underscores the end of colonialism on the African continent. However, there still remain a few areas where the process is not complete, but I firmly believe that it will not be long before we can boast of a totally free world. In this regard, I should like to say that, with respect to the question of the return of the Chagos Archipelago to the sovereignty of Mauritius, we have continued to pursue a positive dialogue with the United Kingdom and that some progress has been registered.

The United Nations of today is perceived differently from what it was less than a decade ago. The fabric of international relations is undergoing profound transformation. There is now more latitude and scope for international cooperation and partnership than ever before and the United Nations is increasingly becoming the focal point for such cooperation on a number of fronts. The numerous activities in such fields as peace-keeping, preventive diplomacy, peacemaking, humanitarian relief, election monitoring and supervision undertaken by the Organization during the past few years indicate that its leadership and potential to play an active role on the international scene have been recognized.

But we should all accept the obvious reality that the United Nations, despite its potential and goodwill, does not have the material capacity nor can it muster the financial resources to attend to every potential or actual crisis situation. While it has become evident that solutions to the present-day crises cannot but be evolved within the framework of international cooperation, such cooperation, however, is still lacking or, where it does exist, is but lukewarm in substance. That is why, despite the end of super-Power rivalry which, in theory, should have eased tensions the world over, conflicts and tensions have continued to flare up. Though the international community does mobilize itself, albeit with disastrous delay at times, to address such situations, peaceful solutions remain elusive. Is it because our agenda in addressing these problems is not always the same? Coming from a small island State where our priorities remain the economic progress of the country and the

constant improvement of the quality of life of our citizens, I harbour the dream that we, leaders of the international community, can still bequeath to future generations a world which thrives on peace. On the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization can we not pledge and dedicate ourselves to that goal and recommit our efforts to that end?

It has, it seems, become fashionable to question whether the United Nations system is well adapted to the new changing situations that confront us and whether it is equipped to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. But we often forget that we are the United Nations.

My delegation believes that the United Nations, given its universality, should inevitably continue to have a central and important role in the universal management of our society. But to be able to do this satisfactorily there is an urgent need not only to revitalize the Organization, streamlining its agenda, but also to overhaul its structures, bringing in more transparency in its internal operations and taking on board the aspirations of the developing countries which, after all, constitute the majority of our world.

In this regard, my delegation welcomes the ongoing deliberations in the open-ended working group on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council. It is our hope that the wide spectrum of views expressed so far on this subject, though seemingly divergent, would eventually converge to become a consensual approach that would render the Council more transparent and democratic.

The review of the membership of the Council should be such as to make it functionally effective and as widely representative of the membership of the United Nations. But it should also, I reiterate, be the product of as large a consensus as possible to preserve its credibility. In this context, while considering an increase in the permanent membership of the Council, one should not be biased in favour of the economic giants of this world alone. The developing countries have a legitimate right to be represented on the permanent slate of the Security Council, for our concerns are different from those of the industrialized and developed countries. The African and Latin American continents should imperatively have their share of the responsibility incumbent on the Council. We have no doubt that those called upon to represent these two continents as permanent members will have significant contributions to make in the interest of the world at large. While we do not favour too radical a reform, we believe that the decisions of the Council should be arrived at by consensus rather than through veto power. Such decisions would obviously be more easily acceptable to the international community. However, the present veto system should be maintained for some time to come.

It is a fact that the United Nations has been playing a more active role in world affairs and has been assuming greater responsibilities in the fields of peace-keeping and mediation in conflicts in a number of countries. But the restructuring exercise needs to address other levels of our Organization as well, so as to embrace the development dimension of international relations. In this respect, one should not shy away from a possible review of the United Nations Charter itself, but the process, we believe, should be gradual and consensual. A strengthened and reformed United Nations should be able to contribute positively to the fulfilment of the vision of its founders.

It is opportune here to remind ourselves of what, as far back as 1945, the then United States Secretary of State reported to President Truman on the result of the San Francisco Conference. He said:

> "The battle of peace has to be fought on two fronts. The first is the security front where victory spells freedom from fear. The second is the economic and social front where victory means freedom from want. Only victory on both fronts can assure the world of an enduring peace. No provisions that can be written into the Charter will enable the Security Council to make the world secure from war if men and women have no security in their homes and jobs."

Almost half a century later, we find an echo of the same sentiment when our Secretary-General states that

> "the development imperative is as much a priority for the United Nations as the imperative of peace. ... There can be no sustainable development without peace. There can also be no real peace without development."

We fully subscribe to those views and would go even further to say that international peace and security, as well as an equitable and conducive environment and the redress of the asymmetrical international financial and trading relations, are necessary prerequisites for the sustainable development of all countries in the world, especially the developing ones.

In this respect, the plight of Africa is well known to the world community. The causes of its ills and of its weaknesses are well documented. While the disease has been diagnosed, the cure is not yet in sight. Africa needs a new order with a clear vision of hope that will ensure its gradual integration into the international economic and trading systems. Its marginalization, deliberate or accidental, must be stopped and reversed.

The issue of human rights continues to be the subject of varying perception. We believe that human rights are indivisible, and therefore we hold the view that a revised and reformed United Nations should concentrate equally, if not more, on economic, social and cultural rights by promoting international cooperation for development.

May I be allowed here to quote the example of Mauritius? Since the last decade, the rapid strides we have been making in the economic field have been accompanied by consistent progress in the social and cultural fields, as well as in the strengthening of the democratic framework. Basic rights and freedoms, such as freedom of speech, of association and of movement, and the holding of general elections at regular intervals of five years with the free participation of political parties and individuals are an integral part of our culture. Our experience exemplifies the synthesis that is being achieved through economic development, which brings dignity to the population; social development, for the protection of the weaker sections of the population; and the strengthening of all democratic institutions, for the evolution of a harmonious society.

The report by the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Development" is therefore timely and will no doubt place the issue of development in its different aspects in a prominent place on the international agenda. The Secretary-General needs to be commended for this interesting report, which highlights the multidimensional nature of development. The report has been further enriched by the constructive proposals contained in the Ministerial Declaration of the Group of 77 adopted on 24 June 1994 in New York. I commend this Declaration as an important contribution by the developing world to the debate on the report.

Let our world, both developing and developed, take advantage of the new environment. And let us commit ourselves to reducing poverty, hunger and illiteracy in the world; commit ourselves to ensuring a steady and increasing flow of financial resources, as well as transfer of technology, to the developing countries; and commit ourselves to comprehensively tackling the debt problem. Only through such commitments and shared responsibilities and action in an increasingly interdependent world will it be possible to stop the further marginalization of a large number of developing countries and help integrate them in a just and equitable international economic, financial and trading system.

Next year will witness the establishment and setting up of the World Trade Organization, which is expected to contribute towards the development of an integrated, more viable and durable multilateral trading system. I take this opportunity to exhort the members of that organization to adopt positive measures so as to ensure that the developing countries, this time, secure a fair share in the expected growth of the world.

Genuine fears have been voiced by a number of developing countries, especially small island States, that are vulnerable to natural disasters and suffer from the disadvantages of being far from their sources of supply of raw materials and foodstuffs and the markets for their export products. It is feared that the results of the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) will adversely affect their trade, especially the trade preferences from which they benefit in the context of contractual agreements entered into with a group of developed countries, principally with the European Union.

My own country stands to be affected both as an exporter and as a net food-importing country. We therefore appeal for steps to be taken, as provided for in the Final Act of the GATT Uruguay Round, to provide adequate compensation for any such loss. I should like here to stress the need for the preservation of the existing preferential trade regime of the Lomé Convention of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group and the European Economic Community.

Any attempt to bring in new issues concerning the multilateral trading system, including the World Trade Organization, would not be appropriate at this juncture. In this regard, it would serve no useful purpose for the developed and the developing countries to adopt confrontational positions while dealing with such sensitive issues as the "social clause and the trade regime" and "trade and the environment". My country for one will resist the inclusion of any clause that may appear as a disguised protectionist measure.

However, I also believe taking as an example my own country, where worker's rights are protected by the

Constitution, that internationally recognized labour standards and norms and the legitimate rights of workers should be respected. This is important if man is to be at the centre of development. The enjoyment of these rights, and the observance of labour standards, should be encouraged in all countries, without, of course, losing sight of their respective levels of socio-economic development, or the development needs and objectives of developing countries.

I am happy to state, in that context, that my Government recently introduced legislation to ensure that workers participate in the management of enterprises and become shareholders in the sugar sector where they are employed. This is being done in the context of a new social order based on partnership, and it is meant to favour the democratization of the economy.

This leads me to the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), to be held next year. In our view, all these conferences are geared towards one simple goal: to better the lot of mankind, and in so doing, to enhance human dignity. It is our sincere and cherished hope that these summit meetings and conferences will contribute to the debate on the Agenda for Development and will encourage a better understanding of the nature and complexity of the development problems facing the developing world. May these conferences come up with reasonable and concrete proposals, backed by a clear commitment of resources for their implementation.

It is true that the end of the cold war and the disappearance of ideological conflicts have significantly altered the geopolitical configuration of the world. They have modified the nature of international relations, with strategic economic alliances replacing military ones in a world still in search of a new order — which thus far has remained elusive.

In such an uncertain and volatile situation, where the survival of the fittest and of the most competitive is the order of the day, small and economically vulnerable countries need assurances with regard to their security and continued economic development and social progress. In this respect, renewed attention is being given, in different parts of the world, to regional cooperation and integration.

We believe that the salvation of small and weak economies depends on the successful implementation of regional cooperation and integration programmes. We view regionalism as an important complement to multilateralism, especially when open regionalism does not lead to exclusiveness. I therefore appeal to the international community to fully support the successful implementation of regional cooperation and integration programmes, especially the nascent ones in Africa.

In our own region, organizations such as the Indian Ocean Commission, the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States and the Southern African Development Community are useful vehicles for economic cooperation and integration among member countries and help to strengthen our economies.

Political stability, good governance, respect for basic human rights and freedoms are prerequisites to economic development. It is therefore the duty of the international community to ensure movement in that direction. We have, however, failed by not responding quickly enough to the agony of Rwanda, and, as the Secretary-General has stated, we have acquiesced in the continued loss of lives. The serious plight of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Rwanda remains a major source of concern. We should redouble efforts and commit ourselves to urgently addressing such human catastrophes of epic proportions, which, if left unattended or if tackled timidly, may very well spill over into neighbouring countries of the region and affect them adversely.

I had the opportunity to state my country's position on this issue at the recent Organization of African Unity (OAU) Summit in Tunis, where I warned that Burundi was sitting on a powder keg that risked explosion unless the international community acted in earnest to contain the problem. Though the situation has eased to a certain extent, due mainly to *Operation Turquoise* and to the commitment of troops from OAU member States, the region still remains fragile. Countries which have the resources must come to the fore and fully assume their responsibility to prevent a recurrence of this tragic episode.

My country, for its part, besides its interventions in international forums and its modest contributions in cash and in kind, played host to the dialogue between the President of Zaire and the President of Rwanda, which culminated in the signature of an accord with respect, mainly, to the refugee situation.

I should like to use the opportunity of speaking before this forum to appeal to my brothers in Angola,

Liberia and Somalia and elsewhere in Africa, where pockets of tension exist that can flare up into unnecessary conflicts, to apply peaceful means to resolve and iron out their differences.

It would be fitting here to flag Mozambique as an example where dialogue has prevailed over armed struggle, and where, in a few days' time, the people will be exercising their freedom of choice to elect those they wish to govern the country. Similarly, it is a matter of satisfaction that the constitutional problem in Lesotho has been resolved peacefully and through constant dialogue. In that respect, I should like to commend the efforts deployed by my brothers, Presidents Mugabe, Masire and Mandela.

I wish the same fervour could be demonstrated by others who are active in the Bosnia and Herzegovina conflict, where countless lives continue to be lost, where human suffering has crossed the limits of endurance, where the population seems to have resigned itself to a fate imposed upon it by the warring factions. Are we not responsible enough, human enough, to resolve the problems besetting that region, the more so as conflicts like those which have plagued Northern Ireland and the Middle East over decades, and which appeared unsolvable, are being addressed resolutely, and with positive results?

Indeed, the positive developments in the Middle East mark a turning point in the inter-State relationships in that region and augur well for peace and stability. It is my fervent wish that the spirit of moderation and compromise that has made it possible for positive results to be achieved in the ongoing negotiations will continue to prevail and helps open other avenues for peace to be restored in the entire region.

Let us, leaders of the world, on the eve of the fiftieth year of our Organization's existence, take inspiration from the positive trends that have emerged in the Middle East, from the successful transition in South Africa as a result of peaceful negotiations, and commit ourselves to resolving conflictual situations — historical as well as current — through dialogue. In this regard, let me make an earnest appeal to Pakistan and to India, countries equally dear and near to us, not to internationalize their differences but to address them bilaterally through peaceful means. We should like to encourage both Governments to resume their dialogue in a spirit of trust and compromise, in the higher interests of their countries and peoples, and indeed in the interest of the entire region.

I am gratified to learn that in Sri Lanka, following the installation of the new Government, a dialogue has been initiated between the parties in conflict. This is indeed a commendable move.

Such positive efforts can only be beneficial to the international community, for the peace dividends that will thus ensue will permit the world to tackle, with undivided attention, the agenda of economic and social development, in order to make the world a safer place in which to live. That is why we continue to hope for speedy positive developments in such places as Fiji, where equality of citizenship is yet to prevail.

Another issue that remains a major preoccupation of my country is the question of disarmament. Next year, the Conference to review the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will take place. Mauritius has made its position amply clear on this issue. Any extension of the NPT should be linked to progress on nuclear disarmament and the achievement of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, as well as the establishment of a negotiating framework within which the discriminatory nature of the Treaty should be examined. We have stated in no uncertain terms that the world cannot be divided permanently into countries permitted to have nuclear weapons and countries not permitted to have them. A treaty perceived as making such a decision permanent is bound to fail and cannot be expected to last.

Without the convincing support of the NPT members, we may fail in our endeavours to make the world nuclear-weapon-free. The recent dispute between a Member State of the Treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency clearly indicates that the NPT is not infallible. Equally alarming is the trading in enriched uranium and plutonium, in stark contradiction of the objectives of the Treaty. As long as there are nuclear-weapon States, there will be an urge for other States with nuclear potential to acquire such weapon-grade material, thus putting the world community in jeopardy.

Mauritius would like at this point to welcome the efforts for the conclusion of a treaty to make all of Africa, a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It is our earnest hope that the exclusive club of nuclear-haves, principally the permanent members of the Security Council, will do everything to permit the emergence of such a zone and the conclusion of the treaty.

(spoke in French)

As Acting President of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of French-speaking countries, I should like to say a few words in the French language, which brings together this community of dialogue and cooperation numbering 47 countries with more than 400 million inhabitants. Since 1986, the highest officials of these countries, which are found on the five continents, have been regularly holding summit meetings to review those problems that affect the francophone world and seek together for solutions to global problems.

My country thus had the honour of hosting the Fifth Summit of the Francophone World last October. It may seem surprising to some that a country member of the Commonwealth whose official language is English should have been selected to host such a Summit and thus to become the spokesman of the francophone group for a two-year period. In fact, for us Mauritians, this is in no way unusual, since we live with our cultural and linguistic diversity in perfect harmony. Indeed, Mauritian culture is the result of a synthesis worked out through history. We live in a society that integrates the linguistic, religious and social contributions of Europe, Africa and Asia. The theme of "Unity in Diversity", which inspired the work of that Summit, is very dear to our country. All the segments of the Mauritian nation participate in creating a national identity while preserving their ancestral cultures. This message of unity in diversity, based on the recognition of difference and on human solidarity, is even more relevant in the difficult and complex situation in today's world.

The Heads of State or Government wish the francophone world to cooperate more closely with regional and international organizations that are working for democracy, peace and the development of the world — first and foremost, of course, is the United Nations. We have adopted a series of resolutions to promote this new partnership. It is, moreover, in this context that we had the pleasure of welcoming the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to Mauritius. During the Summit, we were able to intensify a dialogue that we have been maintaining since then by various means. However, we hardly had time to acquire the means to implement our own resolutions when events began to move rapidly in the francophone world.

Indeed, on the day following the Mauritius Summit, our brother Melchoir Ndadaye, President of Burundi, was brutally assassinated. The Organization of African Unity and the United Nations were immediately notified. Then the situation deteriorated in Rwanda, and once again we notified these two international forums. Given the lack of action during the first few days, we welcomed France's intervention for strictly humanitarian purposes, which allowed numerous lives to be saved.

In addition to their concern regarding the Great Lakes region, the countries of the francophone world are deeply moved about the situation in Haiti. We have been following developments in that country very closely, and we were gratified to note that positive steps have been taken towards re-establishing democracy. We are awaiting with great impatience, and in the interest of the Haitian people, the return of legitimate power to this country, a country that has suffered so much in the course of its recent history.

The francophone world, for its part, has adopted numerous resolutions aimed at securing for the Francophone community a more dynamic presence internationally. It will thus be able to make a contribution in the specific fields of its competence. I should like, in particular, to cite a resolution endorsing the Secretary-General's report, which is rightly entitled "An Agenda for Development". This resolution spells out those themes which the francophone world would like to see taken into consideration in the agenda and which will be put forward by our representatives within the United Nations during the preparatory stages.

At the Rio de Janeiro Summit, later in Vienna, then in Barbados and in Cairo, and tomorrow in Copenhagen and in Beijing, the countries of the francophone world are consulting on the major problems the United Nations has inscribed on its agenda. This is being done to arrive at common positions for meeting the great challenges of development.

Such concerted action is essential for the harmonious development of our world at the dawn of the third millennium; hence we are called upon to make a specific contribution to illustrate that spirit of humanism that motivates the francophone world.

The Mauritius Summit succeeded in situating the francophone world in a more political and more diplomatic context. The francophone world has an original and positive message to spread through the world, a message of liberty, solidarity and sharing. I am most pleased to have conveyed it to you.

The President *(interpretation from French):* On behalf on the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius for the statement he has just made.

Sir Anerood Jugnauth, Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, was escorted from the rostrum.

Announcement

The President *(interpretation from French):* Before calling on the next speaker in the general debate at this meeting, I should like to inform the members of the Assembly that through an inadvertent error, the wording of item 33 is not correctly reflected in document A/49/251, agenda of the forty-ninth session, and A/49/252, allocation of agenda items for the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/26, the title of item 33 should read: "Question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and related matters". This change will be reflected in the documents to be issued subsequently.

Agenda item 9 ***(continued)***

General debate

The President *(interpretation from French):* I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Malaysia, His Excellency Mr. Anwar Ibrahim.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. May I also express our appreciation to Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana for having successfully guided the work of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session and further enhanced its centrality.

The cold war has ended, and totalitarianism has met its nemesis. At this very critical stage in history, we must seize the opportunity to redesign the international order so as to realize the aspirations of the global community. We must meet this challenge and collectively reconstruct a truly just order for our time and for the generations to come.

Indeed, the global community has reached many significant milestones. More nations have agreed to resolve their disputes by peaceful means. South Africa has emerged from its political catharsis as a nation free of apartheid and with majority rule; Cambodia experienced free and democratic elections; and lasting peace in West Asia came closer to realization with the Israeli-Palestinian accords.

However, the initial euphoria will be somewhat short-lived. The path ahead is strewn with uncertainties and pitfalls. The end of the cold war has yet to reward us fully with its promise of global peace and security. It has instead unleashed the demons of parochial nationalism, tribalism, religious fanaticism — as witnessed in the "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia — tribal warfare in Rwanda and religious dissension in some countries. The North-South divide in wealth, power and control over resources is still too pronounced to be ignored, and the redistribution of global prosperity is far from being realized.

The paramount challenge facing the global community today is to fulfil the promises made in recent years of systemic change in the global environment. This is to be achieved through sustained efforts in regard to economic development and through the strengthening of civil society and multilateral institutions.

Development is the only secure foundation for global peace and security, for the origins of conflicts are often very deeply rooted in socio-economic deprivation and disparities. As for civil society, its growth into maturity requires the establishment of institutions for a stable and responsive social order, a democratic participatory arrangement as a means to channel political energy, and an environment in which culture can flourish.

In all these areas, it is the people that matter — their freedom, security and development. All great traditions of mankind, East and West, concur in the sanctity of the human person, the family as a fundamental unit of society, and the primacy of moral and ethical values as a foundation of civilizations. The sanctity of the human person warrants the State's protection of the inalienable rights of all to freedom, to participate in social, political and cultural processes and to optimize the potential of the human person through development. The rights of the individual must be safeguarded inasmuch as the stability of society cannot be compromised. It is within this framework that we conceive the restoration of human rights in any society, industrial or developing, as a continuing endeavour which we must never abandon.

The promise made at the 1992 Rio Summit remains unfulfilled. If no increased official development

assistance is forthcoming and the international target of 0.7 per cent is not met, this will represent a serious reneging on the Rio commitments, notwithstanding the Global Environment Facility.

This will raise questions as to the commitment of the North to pledges made at major conferences. The World Summit for Social Development will take place next year, and what will be the value of assiduously negotiated documents when, as with the Rio Agenda 21, no real means are provided for their implementation? The recent International Monetary Fund/World Bank meeting at Madrid highlighted the preoccupation of the major developed countries, often at a tangent from the needs and requirements of developing countries.

At the Rio Summit, the developed countries declared that the tropical forests belonged to the whole world. It was maintained that these forests must always remain in order to maintain biological diversity and sustain ecological balance. Today, South-East Asia is covered in thick haze, adversely affecting the health of the people. Hundreds of thousands of hectares of virgin forest are burning, and valuable species are being lost.

If indeed the tropical forest is the heritage of mankind, the responsibility for its protection must necessarily be collective. While the South-East Asian countries will take the necessary measures, we appeal to the global community, especially the richer members, to help us put out this fire on an urgent and priority basis.

We regard the issue of global population as inseparable from the overall concern of development. Reductions in fertility mainly come about from investment in education and health care for women. While we share the fundamental objectives of the Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, we deplore the attempt to impose views without regard for the values of others.

The peace dividend that we aspire to reap will not be realized without sustained growth in the global economy. However, growth prospects are often hampered by short-sighted policies and structural crises within the industrial economies. Viewed in this light, the popular call for macroeconomic stabilization should not be confined to the developing countries alone but instead should encompass both the developing and the industrial economies.

The United Nations will soon commemorate its fiftieth year of existence. It would be uncharitable to ignore altogether the outstanding contributions made to humanity by this world body and its agencies. It has provided a platform for international cooperation in the fields of education, law, health, culture, economics, refugee relief and so on. But more significantly, it has, by its very existence, prepared the groundwork for a global order that would be truly democratic and multicultural.

However, as we draw up the balance sheet of that era and contemplate the challenges of the twenty-first century, we must take into serious account our many limitations. Clearly, the United Nations as it exists today is unable effectively to deal with critical global issues. In the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina the Security Council remains paralysed in the implementation of its own resolutions. Should we also ask then: if the Council was ready to plunge into the Gulf crisis a few years ago, how can that be reconciled with the political timidity and clear absence of resolve to take effective action in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, even after the rejection of the so-called peace plan by the Serbs?

Within the United Nations itself, the peace-keeping operations decided on by the Security Council provide no clear institutional structure for consultation, especially between non-Security-Council member troop-contributing countries and Security Council members. Yet the major Powers are resisting the urgent need for regular consultations between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries.

While the situation in Somalia clearly reflected the need for some form of United Nations involvement, if not intervention, there have been other operations where even countries in the region have been totally opposed to United Nations involvement. My delegation, which has been deeply involved in United Nations peace-keeping operations, is concerned about operations which serve questionable interest groups.

In the Security Council, while agreement between the Permanent Five has removed obstacles and facilitated settlements of disputes, the momentum behind the push to solve issues, if not properly checked and balanced by a process of accountability and non-selectivity of issues, may prove to be the undoing of the Council itself and of its moral authority. The role of major Powers, at least those that still deserve that status, is explicitly recognized in the Charter of the United Nations. However, many of us will not be willing to agree that these Powers should continue to be Charter-privileged to intervene wherever they wish and only when their own interpretations of peace and security warrant intervention.

Reform of the Security Council is necessary to reflect a more equitable geographical representation and towards making the Council more accountable to the general membership. Resistance from a few, whose own claims to being major Powers are becoming increasingly unpersuasive, should not be allowed to stand in the way of change. The issue is not one merely of enlarging the permanent membership but is one of enhanced participation. As the Council is unrepresentative, the first step towards reform must be to increase the numbers of non-permanent members. The veto, a creation of the power politics of the past, must be part of the total reform of the Council.

The United Nations still represents the best recourse for developing countries to advance their interests in global affairs. Hence, we cannot allow the present uncertainties about the structure and role of the United Nations to remain unresolved. The United Nations, despite financial problems, cannot be allowed to become a mendicant of the power brokers at the expense of the principles of the Charter.

The United Nations is the only institution capable of providing the vehicle for a comprehensive and integrated approach to peace and development. A revitalized Economic and Social Council has the potential to coordinate and, it is hoped, harmonize policies emanating from separate bodies such as the G-7 and the Bretton Woods institutions. In this regard priority must be accorded to an Agenda for Development which would provide the new framework for international development cooperation, the basis for a truly global partnership.

The United Nations must also spearhead the struggle towards total and complete nuclear disarmament. The major Powers must not slacken the momentum towards effective non-proliferation and comprehensive test-ban treaties, critical to our collective resolve to halt the arms race and eliminate the utilization of weapons of mass destruction.

Malaysia is prepared to make an early commitment to the goals of true globalism and, with a genuine mechanism reposing in the United Nations, to a new world system for international peace, security and development. We will continue to participate actively in the work of the multilateral system.

International society has grown fourfold since 1945. The world is heterogeneous and multicultural. Meaningful discourse cannot be limited by the narrowness of parameters or an overbearing sense of cultural supremacy.

We must strive to overcome and transcend unproductive polarizations. We all need to purge ourselves of the arrogance and myopia embedded in the old mind-set. We must learn to honour diversity of opinion and the multiplicity of world views and perspectives on life and society. None the less, they must not impede efforts to seek and implement genuine solutions for our common good and shared problems.

We must accept the new realities, particularly the far-reaching systemic transformations in the global economy. The growing economic strength of East Asia and the newly industrializing countries will invariably bring about a new equation of power and responsibility in global affairs.

We are fully aware of the many shortcomings inherent within East Asia; its remarkable economic performance is far from miraculous. Nevertheless, its experience portrays the path of change towards the qualitative search for excellence. Political stability was appropriated to garner efforts for economic growth which ultimately became the means to empower the people. Its strength, as in the case of Malaysia and other South-East Asian countries, is to accept and to experience the proposition that development and democracy are not mutually exclusive: and the exercise in responsible liberty by the ordinary people and their participation in public life does not necessarily result in social indiscipline and political instability. Development is enriched by multiculturalism where the practice of tolerance and moderation has turned religious and ethnic diversity from being a source of conflict into an ingredient for success. In a world torn by ethnic and religious passions and cultural prejudices, the experience of South-East Asia in multiculturalism may provide some clues for devising the means for peaceful coexistence and productive partnership among citizens of the global village.

Dag Hammarskjöld, when reflecting on the state of the world almost 40 years ago, was perhaps less exuberant than we are at the prospects of globalism. With the memory of war still fresh, he said:

> "We must serve our apprenticeship and at every stage try to develop forms of international coexistence as far as is possible at the moment."

That apprenticeship has now been served. The United Nations must innovate and renew itself to address the challenges of the twenty-first century. It must progress and transform itself from being a theatre for the concert of a few powerful nations into an effective and representative vehicle for global governance. And, beyond that, it must be animated by the spirit of justice and a bias towards compassion. In short, the very legitimacy of this international body hinges upon its realizing the ideal of becoming the conscience of the global community.

Address by Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, Prime Minister of the Transitional Government of the Republic of Zaire

The President *(interpretation from French):* The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Transitional Government of the Republic of Zaire.

Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, Prime Minister of the Transitional Government of the Republic of Zaire, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Transitional Government of the Republic of Zaire, His Excellency Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo (Zaire) *(interpretation from French):* At the dawn of the twenty-first century, our planet is seeking a new world balance. Five years have passed since the struggle for world hegemony came to an end and the arms race became less frenzied. Unfortunately, the problems afflicting mankind remain unchanged: death, disease, war, famine, poverty, hotbeds of tension, and the tragic wandering of entire populations. The East-West blocs have been replaced by North-South blocs. The wealthy North is worried because the poor South is a threat to its serenity and comfort.

Far from making the international climate better, the end of the cold war has unleashed instability in the southern hemisphere. Our world is facing a threefold crisis — political and economic crises and a crisis of human society — which is sorely testing international solidarity and the interdependence of States. The many hotbeds of tension in Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa arouse anxiety and concern in our Organization. A number of ideas have been put forward to check these evils on a global scale, with greater or lesser degrees of success, but we feel that the best approach lies in the old saying: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

Preventive diplomacy seems to us to be decisive in maintaining and promoting peace, as recent world history shows. Indeed, it is clear that many current conflicts might have been avoided had the international community involved itself in time to prevent them from worsening.

For obvious reasons, I should like to dwell on the crisis in Rwanda.

A review of the roots of this tragedy shows that the implementation of preventive diplomacy could have prevented it or at least mitigated its effects. If we go back to the earliest manifestations of the ethnic conflict between Hutus and Tutsis, we see many opportunities to resolve it which the international community passed up. But let us look at recent history.

It is clear that if the parties involved had respected the Arusha Agreements, the Rwandese tragedy would not have taken on its current dimensions. It is equally clear that the international community could have guaranteed respect for these Agreements. Moreover, the presence on Rwandese soil of foreign and international troops shortly before and during the massacres could have prevented them.

The Zairian delegation has recalled the past so that we can learn the lessons it teaches for present and future problems. What are these problems?

Millions of Rwandese left their country and took refuge in neighbouring countries. This mass exodus caused immeasurable damage and created extremely serious social and economic imbalances in those countries. Zaire, for instance, had to absorb nearly 3 million people in less than three months. The little city of Goma, with a normal population of 200,000, on 14 June alone took in 10,000 refugees a minute. The modern world has never seen such an uprooting of populations.

The effects of such a situation could only be tragic: the swamping of infrastructures, the re-emergence of endemic disease, housing shortages, the devastation of crops, environmental destruction, disputes among people living in close quarters, insecurity, and countless other examples. In addition to all this, the nationality problem is worsening — and it was already a matter of concern in that part of Zaire.

The current situation in countries bordering Rwanda meets all the preconditions for preventive intervention by the international community. Of course, it is already engaged in humanitarian operations on behalf of the refugees. My delegation takes this opportunity to thank all the countries and organizations involved in these operations. France in particular deserves a special tribute for having saved so many lives in "Operation Turquoise". But it is high time that the international community moved beyond the humanitarian aspect towards a solution of the fundamental causes of the Rwandese tragedy and its effects on neighbouring countries.

These causes relate to the displacement and presence of refugees in countries that are in no way equipped to take in such human masses. Thus the solution lies in the return of refugees to their country of origin. Yet we note that none of the countries directly concerned by this phenomenon can cope on its own with the situation without assistance from the international community.

Let us take the case of my country and of Rwanda. The tragedy of Rwanda, which occurred shortly before the installation of our current Government in Zaire, could benefit only from stop-gap measures on the part of our Government, given the already disturbing situation of the economy in Zaire — and the problems remain unsolved.

From this rostrum, Zaire issues a fervent appeal to the international community for support equal to the difficulties experienced by our population.

We know that the return of refugees to their countries is being thwarted by various factors: their administrative and political organizations were reconstituted in the camps; the militia, who are difficult to identify, and the former civilian and military authorities, are intimidating the refugees; the commitment by the new masters of Kigali to persuade their compatriots to embark on a voluntary, secure return seems inadequate, to say the least; in an effort to respect the spirit of the relevant Organization of African Unity convention on refugees, the Government of Zaire, with no means, is confronted with enormous difficulties in trying to remove the former soldiers from the borders.

All of these factors should lead the international community to realize the gravity of the situation — particularly as the evolution of the Hutu-Tutsi conflict risks swinging back and forth: today we are witnessing a mass return to Rwanda of Tutsi refugees who were driven into exile 30 years ago; if the international community is not careful, however, tomorrow we will witness another tragedy in Rwanda, this time tied in with the return of the Hutu refugees.

It is thus urgent that the world help these two ethnic groups to learn how to live together again in harmony.

We believe that solutions to the tragedy in Rwanda should include the four following elements: power sharing between the parties involved; the establishment of a multi-ethnic army; the establishment of guarantees for the safe return of refugees; and assistance by the international community to the countries of asylum and of origin.

Having sketched out the very dark and disturbing picture of the situation that prevails in the Great Lakes region, I would now like to turn to the situation in my own country, Zaire.

Situated in the heart of Africa, Zaire is a country in deep crisis. Since the beginning of this decade, Zaire has been experiencing a serious institutional crisis, punctuated by individual events which have contributed to destroying all the basic balances of our economy.

Our country just barely averted a crisis which could have been comparable to the one in Rwanda. As we know, the democratization process initiated in Zaire on 24 April 1990 was one of the most tumultuous of the entire African continent. A national conference which lasted almost two years was unable to reconcile the political actors. National unity was harmed by the reappearance of centrifugal and sectarian movements. Ethnic tensions erupted here and there throughout the country. In short, we might well have experienced the same phenomena of massacres and mass displacements of populations we deplore in Rwanda.

Zaire succeeded in averting this great tragedy owing in large part to the timely assistance provided by the international community.

We do not wish to minimize either the wisdom and the work done by the internal forces in Zaire, or the ongoing support from what we call the troika: the group of countries consisting of Belgium, France and the United States of America.

We should also like to recognize that it was under the good offices of the Secretary-General of our

Organization that meetings were held that brought together all of the political trends in Zaire.

The results of these meetings were of major political importance because they put an end to the duplication of constitutional texts as well as of institutions of transition towards a new democratic republic.

On 11 July 1994 the transitional parliament established a Government which represents the majority of the people of Zaire. This Government intends to conduct the nation's politics exclusively through parliamentary control.

In Zaire as elsewhere, democratization is a lengthy process which requires considerable material and financial resources. I am thinking not of the resources needed at particular moments — for example to organize and hold free and transparent elections. I am referring to the substantial resources needed to stabilize the economic and social environment, which will provide the framework for democratization. This stability has long been ignored, but today is increasingly being recognized as the prerequisite for progress towards democracy.

If this is truly the case, then many countries in Africa and throughout the world have small hope of completing their democratization, or at least of completing it within a reasonable time-frame. For in these countries, politics are grossly distorted by ills such as poverty, malnutrition, ignorance, violence and so forth.

When a country relies only on its national efforts to resolve all of those ills, it very quickly gets locked into a vicious circle which only exacerbates its problems.

The second crisis facing mankind is economic in nature. This crisis dates back to the 1970s and derives from fundamental inadequacies in the economic system established at the end of the Second World War. The granting of independence to countries that were colonies at the time completely changed the international situation.

This crisis derives from structural lacunae and from the imbalance in interdependent areas such as those of commodities, trade, energy, currency and finance.

For this reason, we would propose that the concept of preventive diplomacy be transposed into the economic area. This would imply action being taken on the part of the international community to deal with the imbalance in a national economy before that imbalance leads to a widespread social crisis.

Socio-economic conditions have worsened considerably in Zaire since the beginning of democratization. In the last five years, the basic balances of the Zaire economy have been completely destroyed. As a result, there is a particularly acute economic and financial crisis.

This economic crisis has been accompanied by a profound moral crisis, which has led to plundering and systematic destruction of the economic fabric.

It goes without saying that such an economic situation can hardly lead us to the blossoming of democracy, due to its negative impact on the living conditions of citizens.

It is equally obvious that Zaire cannot emerge all on its own from this situation. The current Government has of course included in its programme specific short-term measures to slow down somewhat the continuing deterioration of social conditions. But these measures and the Government's recovery plan as a whole can be effective only if they are supported by strengthened cooperation between Zaire and its bilateral and multilateral partners.

However, as is known, this cooperation has been suspended, and most of Zaire's partners are making the resumption of such cooperation conditional on tangible progress being made towards democracy and progress in economic management. Thus, we find ourselves faced with a complex conditionality. The assistance my country needs to move towards democracy and good management is made conditional on the prior achievement of democracy and good management.

My country is not an isolated case. This kind of conditionality is increasingly a determining factor in cooperation between developing countries, particularly in Africa, and their multilateral and bilateral partners. In other words, many countries today are confronted by a vicious circle that obstructs their access to the resources of the international community.

Our Organization must find some means of breaking this circle because the survival of vast numbers of the world's citizens — if not that of the human race as a whole — is at stake. It is important to note that the search for these means must lead us off the beaten track so we can find new and imaginative paths. In our search we must create new solutions, such as those that made it possible to rebuild Europe after the Second World War.

The third ill afflicting the world today is the crisis of society. Human society is falling prey to the re-emergence and supremacy of force and violence over the rule of law in relations between States, in contempt of all the rules of good conduct. Two thirds of the human race suffers from hunger, endemic disease, malnutrition, undernourishment, unemployment, lack of information, acculturation — in short, total underdevelopment. The political and economic crisis also has a negative effect on society.

The Government of which I am the head is a Government of transition between an old order and a new, emerging republic in which we will recognize every citizen's right to freedom of thought, expression, association and movement, a new republic where justice is independent, where the police and the army must serve to protect the citizen, a new republic where the press is free.

My Government intends to make respect for human rights in Zaire one of its fundamental priorities of action. From this rostrum I make an appeal to the specialized agencies of our Organization to share their enriching experience with us and to help us effectively in realizing our aims.

The establishment of institutions for our new, resolutely democratic republic will involve the organization in the near future of free, transparent and honest elections. My Government hopes to see the United Nations community join Zaire in this last stage of our long journey towards our goal — a State of law — by assisting in the preparation, organization and monitoring of these elections at all levels.

Before concluding, I would just like to express to you, Mr. President, the great satisfaction my delegation feels at seeing you presiding over the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. We are all aware that your election is a tribute to your country, Côte d'Ivoire. But it also represents the international community's recognition of your qualities as a statesman and knowledgeable diplomat. Your competence and experience are without any doubt a guarantee of the success in our work. We also wish to congratulate all the members of the General Committee.

I would be remiss if I did not say how greatly my delegation appreciates the way in which your illustrious predecessor presided over the forty-eighth session.

We extend our best wishes and our support to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his commitment and his tireless efforts to promote peace and respect for human rights.

I wish to take this opportunity to pay a warm tribute to the people of South Africa for their political maturity, which, along with the assistance of the international community, made it possible to do away with apartheid and to bring democracy to that country. It is with great joy and genuine pleasure that, on behalf of the Government and the people of Zaire, I congratulate the new, democratic, multiracial Republic of South Africa on its return to the United Nations.

Finally, I should like to congratulate the political leaders of the State of Israel and of the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as all those who served as mediators, for their contribution to a comprehensive and definitive settlement to the conflict in the Middle East and the question of Palestine.

To sum up, I would simply say that I came here with three messages. The first one is that of the interdependence of nations in mutually beneficial cooperation and with no exclusions. My second message is that, in its action, my Government attaches the highest priority to the swift establishment of a new Zaire, a State of law where fundamental freedoms and the rights of citizens will be the major concern of those in power. My third message is a call for the effective implementation of the concept of preventive diplomacy to promote peace and eradicate poverty in the world.

Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo, Prime Minister of the Traditional Government of the Republic of Zaire, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President *(interpretation from French):* The next speaker is the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, His Excellency Mr. Roberto Romulo.

Mr. Romulo (Philippines): Please allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the exalted office of President of the General Assembly. Your distinguished career and your experience in international affairs, together with your outstanding personal qualities, assure us of wise and skilled leadership at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

As we approach the fiftieth year of the life of our Organization, let us look back to the first principles of its existence. Let us see how we can apply those principles to the dynamic realities of our time and, to the extent that

human discernment will allow, to the uncertain circumstances of the next half century.

Mr. Biegman (Netherlands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Emerging from the unspeakable horror and devastation of untrammelled global conflict, the international community brought forth the United Nations as an instrument, above all, for preventing conflict and keeping the peace. This mission was to be carried out, if possible, through the encouragement of the peaceful settlement of disputes by the contending parties themselves or, if necessary, through the interposition of armed force by the United Nations.

As with any human institution, the United Nations record in this regard has been mixed. We find that the United Nations has been effective in keeping the peace in those cases in which both the parties to the disputes and the major Powers involved have turned — or have been compelled to turn — to the international community to separate the contending forces and allow them a respite from war. This we have seen in such places as Cyprus, Angola, Mozambique, Liberia and certain parts of the Middle East, including Lebanon.

In recent years, a singular success was achieved in my own part of the world when in Cambodia, upon the resolve of the international community and the Cambodian parties themselves, the United Nations not only enforced the peace but also managed the transition to a regime of peace and national reconciliation.

Contending with matters of war and peace has engaged the greater portion of the attention and preoccupation of the United Nations and of the international community. However, our founding fathers recognized from the very beginning that it is not enough to head off crises and intervene in conflicts, but that the roots of war and peace lie in the human condition and the human mind. It is thus there, at their roots, that mankind must deal with questions of war and peace.

As we look back at this half-century, we see with extraordinary clarity that the enduring triumphs of the international community have come not with the imposition of outside force but when the deepest concerns of the nations and peoples involved are addressed and resolved. In the past year, two such triumphs brightened, like twin comets, the history of the human community, forcefully demonstrating yet again this essential reality. These triumphant achievements came in precisely those two areas that had most deeply engaged the United Nations for the greater part of its existence — South Africa and the Middle East.

In South Africa, national peace and reconciliation in a regime of democracy emerged victorious after decades of struggle, led by the United Nations, against apartheid and on behalf of human dignity, racial equality, majority rule and political pluralism. This happened only after most of the political forces in the country recognized these universal values as essential to the survival of the South African nation.

In the Middle East, the dramatic breakthrough worked out by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) has opened the doors of hope for an end to the Arab-Israeli conflict. This was made possible by the tenacious insistence of the international community, mainly through the United Nations, on the right of the Palestinian people to govern themselves and on the right of all States in the region to a secure existence within internationally recognized boundaries. It finally occurred because the leaders of Israel and the PLO and other Arab leaders recognized the essential nature of these rights.

Sadly, savage conflicts continue to ravage lives in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Rwanda and other areas experiencing similar tragedies, mainly because people of influence among the various ethnic groups, tribes and clans have not accepted the fundamental truth of their common humanity.

For a long time, the United Nations has advanced the proposition that economic development — raising the income of a nation as a whole — was vital to peace and stability in the world. The United Nations is certainly right to emphasize this important reality. In many cases, extreme poverty has led to despair and to a sense of outrage over the perceived injustice of living in penury and deprivation in a world of affluence and profligate consumption, of being inadequately compensated for the use by others of one's nation's human and natural resources, and of being doomed to a chronic inability to shake off an unpayable debt to foreign creditors.

Fortunately, many developing nations — and the Philippines is proud to take its place among them — have made hard political decisions and adopted economic policies favourable to dynamic and sustained economic growth.

These are thus hopeful times for economic growth, at least for those countries in a position to take advantage of a more liberal international trading regime. However, as many countries, and the United Nations itself, have realized, economic development by itself is not enough. Raising the overall income of a nation is not enough. A larger gross national product does not necessarily mean a better life for the individual citizen. A bigger economy by itself does not satisfy the individual person's aspiration to human fulfilment.

Indeed, economic growth cannot be sustained for long unless the individual citizen and the individual community have a stake in that growth and unless they are mobilized and empowered to take active part in the process of development. Economic growth would be meaningless to the individual who does not share in its benefits or whose community is destroyed by it. Development is empty for persons who are deprived of their individual rights and freedoms. A society cannot find fulfilment in growth, and indeed the development process itself is severely hampered, if it does not take adequate care of its vulnerable groups: women, children, ethnic minorities, the handicapped, the homeless. Development cannot be sustained unless the nurturing qualities of the natural environment are conserved for future generations.

Care for citizens' fulfilment as human beings, for their community and for society cannot wait. It cannot wait for total peace to be achieved or for a certain level of development to be attained. All these — peace, development, and the quality of society and of human life — must proceed simultaneously.

We in the Philippines have learned this lesson the hard way and are now applying it faithfully. We have secured peace and national reconciliation through a peace process that includes having sincere discussions with dissident elements and extending a generous amnesty to them. We have granted a substantial degree of autonomy and self-rule to our ethnic minorities, particularly the Muslim community. We have devolved extensive authority, responsibility and resources on local governments and communities, and we have restored the system of democratic pluralism, through which the people and their groups can thrash out their grievances and advance their interests in peace and with civility.

At the same time, we have pursued a purposeful programme of economic development through the liberalization of the conditions governing trade, investments, and banking and finance, and through the privatization of Government enterprises. We have provided infrastructure facilities and generous incentives for domestic and foreign investors. These, together with the restoration of political stability, have placed us back on the road to economic recovery and self-sustaining growth.

Simultaneously, we have adopted a social agenda through a broad national consensus. In accordance with that agenda we have endeavoured to improve the quality of life of our people, not only because such an improvement is their inherent right, and not only because the ultimate purpose of development, in our view, is the welfare of the individual and his community, but also because we know that the best way to spur economic development is to afford the people a stake in it and because we recognize that the people are an economy's most vital resource.

We are thus jealously safeguarding the individual Filipino's fundamental rights and freedoms. Part of this effort is the importance that we place on human-rights education for all, including the armed forces and the police, a mission that is mandated by a unique provision in our Constitution.

We are expanding the empowerment of our people and their communities, particularly of the most vulnerable groups. We have devoted attention and resources to the concerns of women, including women workers, and of children, particularly those of the poor. We have protected the rights and culture of our ethnic minorities. And we have allocated substantial resources to health and education for the development of our people as our most valuable asset.

We in the Philippines believe that this simultaneous and balanced approach to peace, development and the quality of individual lives must be applied in the international community as well as within nations, in the family of man as well as in national societies.

The expansion of the global economy is important for peace in the world and the progress of nations, but it is not enough. Each country must have a stake in this expansion and an enlarged share of it.

Even this is not enough. The international community must go beyond nations in its ministrations. It must devote greater attention to care and respect for people and to the recognition of the inherent equality of

all human beings — regardless of gender, of age, of race, of religion, of language, of culture or of nationality.

We must all remember that the sources of conflict do not lie only in disputes over territory or resources. As we know only too well, they arise also, and it seems increasingly, from intolerance of other people's beliefs and cultures and from the less than human treatment of people from other lands.

Mankind has made progress in advancing the truth that there are certain things that transcend national boundaries and are the common heritage, the common concern and the common responsibility of all nations and of mankind as a whole. Among these are the environment and the oceans and their resources.

There is something else that transcends national boundaries and summons global responsibility, something that is of infinitely greater worth than even the environment or the oceans. I am speaking of the world's most vulnerable human groups. I speak specifically of migrant workers, refugees, children, the aged and the disabled, and the special concerns of the world's women.

The transnational migration of workers is an increasingly prominent phenomenon of international life in our time. This is the result of supply and demand for workers seeking equilibrium. Migrant workers, however, are more than a commodity to be traded in the international market-place. They have the same dignity and rights as any of us in this Hall. Moreover, they make a vital contribution to the economies and societies of the countries in which they live and work.

And yet, many countries, including developing countries, treat migrant workers as being less than the human beings that they are. At best, these workers are left unprotected by the law governing labour and employment. The international community, the United Nations, cannot allow the abuse of these vulnerable and valuable members of the human family to continue.

We urge member States to ratify or accede to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families as an expression of their recognition of the common humanity that they share with migrants and their families.

The Secretary-General might form a group to submit recommendations to the Assembly at our next session on improving coordination of the various efforts of the United Nations on behalf of migrant workers. And I call upon the High Commissioner for Human Rights to make the rights of migrant workers one of his priority concerns.

I reiterate the call for a global conference on international migration and development, which was supported by many delegations at the recent International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo.

Natural and man-made disasters have created large-scale flows of refugees around the world. While the distinction between refugees and economic migrants has to be resolutely made, genuine refugees must be given all the protection that international conventions call for.

Children, by their very nature, have a claim to mankind's protection and care. That claim is special in the case of street children, children coerced into drug addiction, refugee children and children in the areas of armed conflict or natural disasters. National societies and the international community must ensure that such children are provided with adequate food, medical care, shelter and education. We may need to draw up a convention dealing with the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and the nefarious trade in body parts of children.

The rights, education and empowerment of women around the world are of special importance to the United Nations and to the world, as they have everything to do with some of mankind's most vital concerns — the health and education of children, the advancement of the economy, the preservation of the environment and the management of the country's and the world's population.

We in the Philippines look forward to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and call for the inclusion in its platform of action of measures for the protection and advancement of women's rights, particularly of women in positions of great vulnerability, including women migrant workers, women refugees, and minority women. We also call upon the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders to take steps towards making gender-based violence a crime, especially violence against women migrant workers and the victims of the traffic in women.

Underlying the need to safeguard the welfare of these vulnerable groups is the fundamental issue of human rights, the issue of respect for all people and their

rights, the issue of their inherent equality as human beings. The United Nations has adopted numerous international instruments on human rights, beginning with the Universal Declaration. The Philippines is party to 21 of these.

The United Nations must renew its commitment to foster compliance with these solemn covenants, always with respect for the sovereignty of nations. Since the concept of the inherent rights and equality of human persons resides in the minds of people, United Nations efforts in this regard must begin with education. As our Constitution proclaims, human-rights education is itself a human right.

Our delegation reaffirms its full support for a proposal introduced last year for the declaration of a United Nations decade on human rights education. At the same time, the United Nations human rights machinery must be strengthened, particularly the new office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Centre for Human Rights.

Even as we refocus our concerns on basic human needs, we should not lose sight of the continuing, and even increased, importance of peace-keeping in the mandate of the United Nations. We must, however, make sure that the peace-keeping function does not divert resources from economic and social development, is not used by the major Powers simply to pursue their respective agendas, and is carried out in a transparent and democratic manner.

The Philippines fully supports an approach to international peace and security that is based on securing friendly relations among peoples of different political, cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, respect for international law, and the peaceful settlement of disputes. We believe that the maintenance of international peace and security should not rest primarily on the use or threat of sanctions, armed force, or other coercive measures. Nor should peace-keeping operations, important as they are, take the place of the political settlement of disputes.

In light of this, and because of the growing number and complexity of United Nations peace-keeping operations, we in the United Nations have to agree on a set of guiding principles for the establishment and conduct of such operations. Such a set of guidelines would not only contribute to the effectiveness of the peace-keeping operations but also broaden the base of active support for them. The maintenance of international peace and security is a collective responsibility. The United Nations must ensure the international nature of all peace-keeping operations if it is to maintain their credibility.

It is in this spirit that we approach the live question of the reform of the Security Council. It is ironic that, in the midst of the rapid spread of democracy within nations in recent years and the expanding membership of the United Nations, the Security Council remains unrepresentative in its size and in the geographic distribution of its membership and undemocratic in its decision-making and working methods.

Clearly, while the composition and methods of the Security Council must reflect the realities of political and economic power, we have to redress the imbalance in its composition and increase the participation of the general membership and other United Nations organs in its decision-making, if we are to enhance its effectiveness and its accountability. This would involve both enlarging the Council's membership and reforming its methods and procedures.

Specifically, we believe that the Council's membership should be better balanced in terms of geographic distribution and increased representation of the developing countries. At the same time, the Security Council has to improve the transparency of its working methods and decision-making processes, which, in turn, would enhance its working relationship with the general membership and the other principal organs of the United Nations, especially the General Assembly. We look forward to early action on this aspiration by the working group of the General Assembly dealing with the expansion of the Security Council and related matters.

The General Assembly, for its part, must revitalize itself if it is to carry out its functions and discharge its responsibilities under the Charter, including those pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security in which it must assert its role as the only principal organ with universal membership. In the past two years, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions to this effect. Let us begin implementing their key provisions.

Revitalization of the United Nations is demanded by the new circumstances and challenges of today's dynamic world. Let us, at the very least, do our very best to uphold and strengthen the principle of universality in our Organization.

It is in the interest of revitalizing the United Nations that the effective management of the Organization assumes enormous importance. The Philippine delegation welcomes the creation by the General Assembly of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. We suggest, however, that the Assembly consider the possible establishment of an independent advisory group to oversee the work and receive the reports of this Office. This would provide the checks and balances so necessary in a large organization such as the United Nations.

As the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations approaches, we must ensure that the balance is maintained among the principal concerns of the Organization — the maintenance of peace and security, the promotion of economic progress and the advancement of social development.

Because it has lagged behind the first two of the preoccupations of the United Nations, I suggest that we now pay closer attention and turn our efforts more to the third of our Organization's principal concerns — the social component of the basic needs of the human community and the human person.

As we approach this important milestone of the Organization, it is altogether fitting that we focus the work of the United Nations on the human person and society, whose interest and welfare, after all, are the ultimate reason for the existence of the United Nations and the final objective of its works.

The President: I now call on the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, Mr. Rashid Abdullah Al-Noaimi.

Mr. Al-Noaimi (United Arab Emirates) *(interpretation from Arabic):* On behalf of the delegation of the United Arab Emirates it gives me pleasure to extend to the President our congratulations on his election to the presidency of the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly. This is a clear recognition by the international community of his wisdom, diplomatic skills and a sign of esteem for his country, Côte d'Ivoire. We would also like to pay tribute to his predecessor, Ambassador Insanally, for his efforts and his efficiency in steering the deliberations of the last session. In this connection, we salute the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for his efforts aimed at improving the work of the Organization and its efficiency so that it may face up to the challenges and changes of today's world.

On this occasion, I am happy to welcome the return of South Africa to the fold of the international community. We are fully confident that by its return, it will effectively contribute to enhancing the work of the Organization.

The end of the cold war has created a new climate in international relations as better prospects have emerged which promise to make possible the achievement of tangible progress towards finding solutions for a number of international problems. Such encouraging developments afford unprecedented opportunities for international cooperation in the interests of peace, security, stability and sustainable development. At the same time, we must take stock of the new realities that have emerged on the international scene.

In a number of regions, the escalation of wars and regional conflicts poses a serious threat to international and regional peace and security and has led to a state of economic, social and developmental instability. New forms of racism, nationalism and religious fanaticism have emerged, and acts of violence and terrorism in all its forms take place. All these situations and factors impede the building of the better world of peace, coexistence, tolerance and prosperity after which humanity aspires.

This makes it clear that the tasks the United Nations undertakes in performing its role in such areas as the resolution of conflicts, peace building and the prevention of regional conflicts are not easy, given the complex nature of the problems of today's world which differ from those of yesterday's world. Therefore, we must intensify our efforts in support of what the Secretary-General has proposed in his report "An Agenda for Peace", in order for that agenda to be translated into a concrete reality. I refer in particular to the proposals concerning the strengthening of cooperation, partnership and coordination between regional organizations and the United Nations, in line with the provisions of the Charter and the rules and norms of international law. I should mention in particular the organizations associated with our region, such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, the League of Arab States and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, all of which possess a good deal of comprehensive knowledge of the affairs of the region and the nature of its problems.

In the current international situation, it is important to reconsider the question of reforming the structure of the United Nations - particularly the Security Council and

and the General Assembly — in accordance with the Charter, so that, in the exercise of their functions, they may respond and adapt to the nature of the current world situation. The responsibilities of the Security Council have greatly increased over the past few years. This fact makes it necessary to ensure greater participation by all Member States, taking into account the fact that equitable and just geographic and regional distribution would contribute to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security.

Developments in international and regional situations over the past years have made it clear that radical solutions to regional disputes can be reached only by peaceful means, through dialogue and negotiation between countries in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the rules and norms of international law. Proceeding from this, the policy of the United Arab Emirates is based on full and mutual respect for States' sovereignty and independence and for the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, good-neighbourliness and peaceful coexistence.

Thus, throughout the years, we have had a sincere desire to conduct direct negotiations with the Government of Iran with a view to the restoration of our full sovereignty over our three Islands — namely, Lesser Tumb, Greater Tumb and Abu Moussa, which were militarily occupied by Iran in 1971, an action which we consider to be illegal and in breach of the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law.

On a number of occasions, my country has declared from this rostrum its complete readiness to settle this dispute by peaceful means. Hence the initiative by the United Arab Emirates which called for serious and direct negotiations to put an end to the Iranian occupation of our three islands. This stance on our part stemmed not only from the nature of the traditional and historic relations between the two countries and from the current trends on the international scene in dealing with issues of peace and security, but also from our adherence to the principles and tenets of the Islamic Sharia'a, the provisions of the Charter and the rules of international law.

Owing to the Islamic Republic of Iran's failure to respond to all these endeavors and initiatives on the question of the three Islands of the Emirates, the Government of my country has declared its full readiness to put the issue before the International Court of Justice which is the judicial organ competent to settle disputes between States. My Country is pledged to accepting all that follows from the Judgment of the International Court as that Judgment would be based on legal arguments and documents.

This initiative was supported by our sister countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council, as well as by Arab and by other friendly countries. We hope that the international community will support this peaceful initiative, which is based on international legality.

Furthermore, the United Arab Emirates hopes that the Islamic Republic of Iran would share this sincere desire and respond to our serious initiative, especially as the Government of Iran has on previous occasions — I refer to disputes in respect of which the Court was likely to rule in Iran's favour — had recourse to the International Court of Justice and accepted its Judgments. We are confident that this initiative will help to achieve an atmosphere of stability and security in the region and will enhance peaceful coexistence and mutual respect amongst its States and thereby enable them to channel their energies and resources towards the achievement of the socio-economic development for which they stand in dire need after so many years of conflict and war.

Although almost four years have elapsed since the liberation of the sisterly State of Kuwait, the Iraqi regime is still being selective in its implementation of the relevant resolutions of international legality, indifferent to the serious consequences. In addition, it is using delaying tactics and procrastination, instead of cooperating by releasing hundreds of hostages and detainees from Kuwait and other countries.

While we in the United Arab Emirates, with our brethren in the Gulf Cooperation Council, affirm the need to uphold the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq, we consider the international resolutions operative and mandatory. Thus, we demand that the Iraqi regime abide by its legal and political obligations, as stipulated in the Security Council resolutions related to its aggression against Kuwait — in particular, resolution 687 (1991) concerning respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait; and resolution 833 (1993), which determines the demarcation of international borders between Kuwait and Iraq in accordance with the provisions of Chapter VII of the Charter. Short of the implementation of both these resolutions, there cannot be a positive climate conducive to peace and security in the region.

The peace dividend, the product of the atmosphere of international cooperation in the wake of the Cold War era, has increasingly come to determine the characteristics and parameters of a new world order based on regional cooperation, for whose success peace is considered an indispensable prerequisite. Proceeding from this, the United Arab Emirates was one of the countries that welcomed the holding of the Madrid Peace Conference and the conduct of bilateral negotiations. This was also the reason why my country participated in the multilateral negotiations.

While we considered the Declaration of Principles and the agreements that followed on the Palestinian and Jordanian tracks as the first real steps of detente in the Arab-Israeli dispute and the Question of Palestine based on international legality as represented in the relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978) on the Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories, including Al-Quds Al-Shareef, the Syrian Golan and southern Lebanon, at the same time we affirm the necessity of attaining positive results on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks based on these resolutions and on the principles and the premises that were agreed upon in Madrid Peace Conference, namely the land-for-peace principle.

My country, which pins its hopes on the success of the national reconciliation conference in Somalia within the terms of the Nairobi Declaration, is still concerned about the deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation and the obstruction of the distribution of relief supplies to the suffering people of this sisterly country. We did not hesitate to grant humanitarian assistance in addition to our participation in the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II).

We think that the international relief efforts cannot be successful in the worsening internal situation. Therefore, the major responsibility lies with the Somali leaders themselves to formulate a serious response to mediation efforts aimed at the political settlement and national reconciliation, without which their country will not be saved, its reconstruction will not be achieved and the rehabilitation of its people will not take place or pave the way for Somalia's return as an active member of the international community.

My country is deeply concerned over the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly under the circumstances of the continued violation of its sovereignty and of the human rights of its people, especially the Muslims. The facts still indicate that Bosnian Serb forces and their supporters have not refrained for a single day from their acts of aggression or from perpetrating further crimes of ethnic cleansing and genocide. To the contrary, they have gone to great lengths in defying the international will and have even attacked United Nations personnel. These Serbian actions aim at regional expansionist gains that violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Although the United Arab Emirates has continued to call upon the international community since the eruption of this crisis to take serious measures that could restore dignity, security and stability to that country, yet, after 30 months, we are obliged to reiterate our call, in the strongest possible terms, to the international community, particularly the Security Council, to reconsider the manner it has opted for in dealing with the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council must once again take firmer measures against the Serbian aggressor in accordance with Article 42 of Chapter VII of the Charter, and in a manner that would achieve a just negotiated settlement.

At the same time, we reiterate our previous call for the lifting of the arms embargo imposed on the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Security Council resolution 713 (1991) so that the people of that country may be able to defend themselves in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter.

In view of the rapid developments in international relations at the end of the Cold War era, the international situation necessitates an early settlement of the problems left behind by that era. This will be realized only through a general orientation towards disarmament in all its forms, covering both nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction. Thus, we look forward to the 1995 Conference on the Review and Revision of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, hoping that that Conference will produce confidence-building measures on the regional and international levels that would create zones free from weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, particularly in the Middle East region, which has been plagued by conflict for a long period of time.

Despite progress in the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, we are deeply concerned over Israel's acquisition of an immense nuclear capability, which constitutes a constant and continued threat to the security

of the countries and peoples of the region, hampers the realization of the comprehensive objectives of these negotiations and will also endanger international peace.

While social issues are now at the forefront of international relations, the economic and developmental questions of developing countries are increasingly marginalized, and the economic disparities between developing and developed countries continues to widen as a result of the measures taken by developed countries. The exports of developing countries are still impeded by protectionist measures, and their efforts for development are threatened by the burden of foreign indebtedness, reverse financial flows in addition to the constant decline in the price of commodities, on which most of developing countries depend as a major source of national income, as well as the general deterioration in the terms of trade and finance of the developing countries themselves.

The persistence of these problems and the absence of a solution will lead to political and social tensions, which in turn will adversely affect international and regional peace and security.

The nature of these problems requires us to reconsider the structure of the current international social and economic relations with two approaches. The first includes the development of new measures and mechanisms for cooperation amongst the countries of the North and the South, and the second hinges on finding a strategy for economic integration that addresses the elements of developmental deficit among the countries of the South in a way that ensures the realization of socio-economic improvements in the process of sustainable development, and alleviates the concerns of the countries of the South *vis-à-vis* implementation of their immediate and medium-term development plans.

International economic integration has become a concrete reality that must be taken into account. This concept has been recently endorsed by the agreement of a majority of countries to the establishment of the World Trade Organization in Marakesh in sisterly Morocco on 15 April 1994. There can be no doubt that this is a historic event and gives new momentum to the world economy. We hope that the setting up of this new organization will be a positive beginning that improves and enhances the prospects of economic, financial and international trade relations based on justice, co-equality and equity, with a view to bridging the gap between developed and developing countries.

The spirit of tolerance and of adherence to noble cultural and humanitarian values, to the principles and purposes of the Charter and the rules of international law should be our beacon which guides our steps towards the future that we desire. Consequently, we call on Member States to take advantage of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations and to transform it into a historic occasion for a comprehensive review and for ushering in a bright future of stability, security and coexistence prevail for all peoples and countries of the world.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.